

Welcome!

MICHAEL HOOD,
PLACEMAKING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS
@MIDTOWN COLLABORATION CENTER



What Time is it?

SPOKEN WORD FROM

GWENDOLYN GARTH
CORE TEAM MEMBER



How we Got Here

AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

ANTHONY GIAMBRONI
VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

Road trip to Memphis, Tennessee



Acknowledgments

MIDTOWN INC. BOARD & STAFF

CLEVELAND FOUNDATION BOARD
& STAFF

ELECTED OFFICIALS
CITY STAFFERS

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

CORE TEAM ADVISORY MEMBERS
YOUTH ADVISORY MEMBERS



Consulting Team

Rhodes
Heritage
Group



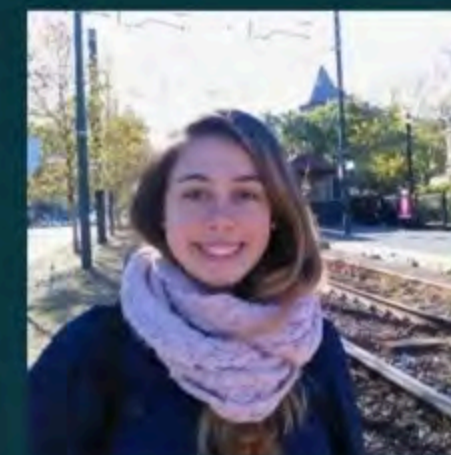
&Access



thirdspace
ACTION LAB



_INTERFACE STUDIO



How to participate in Mentimeter today:

**Using your internet browser on your
phone, go to menti.com**

Enter code:

- Click submit or continue to join.
- Read the question or prompt.
- Type your answer, choose an option, rank items, or vote, depending on the activity.
- Submit your response.
- Watch this screen to see live results.
- Keep the page open for the next question.
- If nothing appears, refresh the page or re-enter the code.
- Ask for help from your neighbor if needed!

**Click on the link
from this QR code
using your phone
camera instead if
that's easier for you:**



Community Introductions

I LIVE HERE

I COME HERE

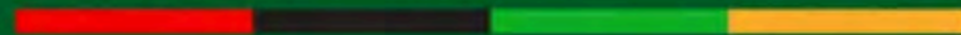
I INVEST HERE

I WORK HERE

Hough is Happening

HOUGH
Cultural Preservation Project

A STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE



Rhodes
Heritage
Group

thirdspace

_INTERFACE STUDIO

Access

MUD
TOWN

famicos
FOUNDATION

CLEVELAND
Foundation

Project Approach

- To center community vision and values in recommendations
- To leverage previous and ongoing efforts
- To produce an actionable strategic roadmap to create the Hough Cultural District

About the Process

LISTENING SESSIONS

- Core Team Advisory Council
- Youth Advisory Council
- Oral History Interviews

COMMUNITY WORK SESSIONS

- Arts & Culture Ecosystem
- Character & District Anchors
- Power, Prosperity & Wealth Creation

CONVERSATION CIRCLES

- Neighborhood Arts & Culture
- Land Use & Placemaking
- Economic Development & Entrepreneurship

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

- Culture & Neighborhood Identity
- Small Business & Entrepreneurs
- Public Realm & Connection

TOWN HALLS TASK 1.0 & 3.0

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Juneteenth 2025
- A New Day in Hough

Cultural Preservation

PAST

- The stories, memories, and oral histories carried by the people who lived it
- The buildings, landmarks, and landscapes that hold the evidence of Black life and culture
- The institutions, gathering places, and traditions that shaped the community's identity

PRESENT

- The artists, organizers, faith communities, and entrepreneurs who animate the neighborhood today
- The cultural practices, social networks, and ways of life that are active and at risk
- The places where culture lives: storefronts, corridors, sacred spaces

FUTURE

- The ownership structures that ensure community members benefit from what gets built
- The policies, designations, and plans that protect culture as the neighborhood grows
- The next generation's right to determine the neighborhood it inherits

Project Values



Wealth Creation

Encouraging Black-owned businesses to foster economic empowerment and reinvestment in the community.



Sense of Belonging & Identity

Cultivating culturally familiar spaces that connect residents to their heritage.



Self-Actualization & Creativity

Encouraging Black-owned businesses to foster economic empowerment and reinvestment in the community.



Celebration & Historic Significance

Highlighting and honoring Black history through landmarks, public art, and events.



Anti-Displacement:

Ensuring the retention of Black residents, businesses, and cultural elements to prevent displacement and preserve community identity.

Defining the Hough Culture District

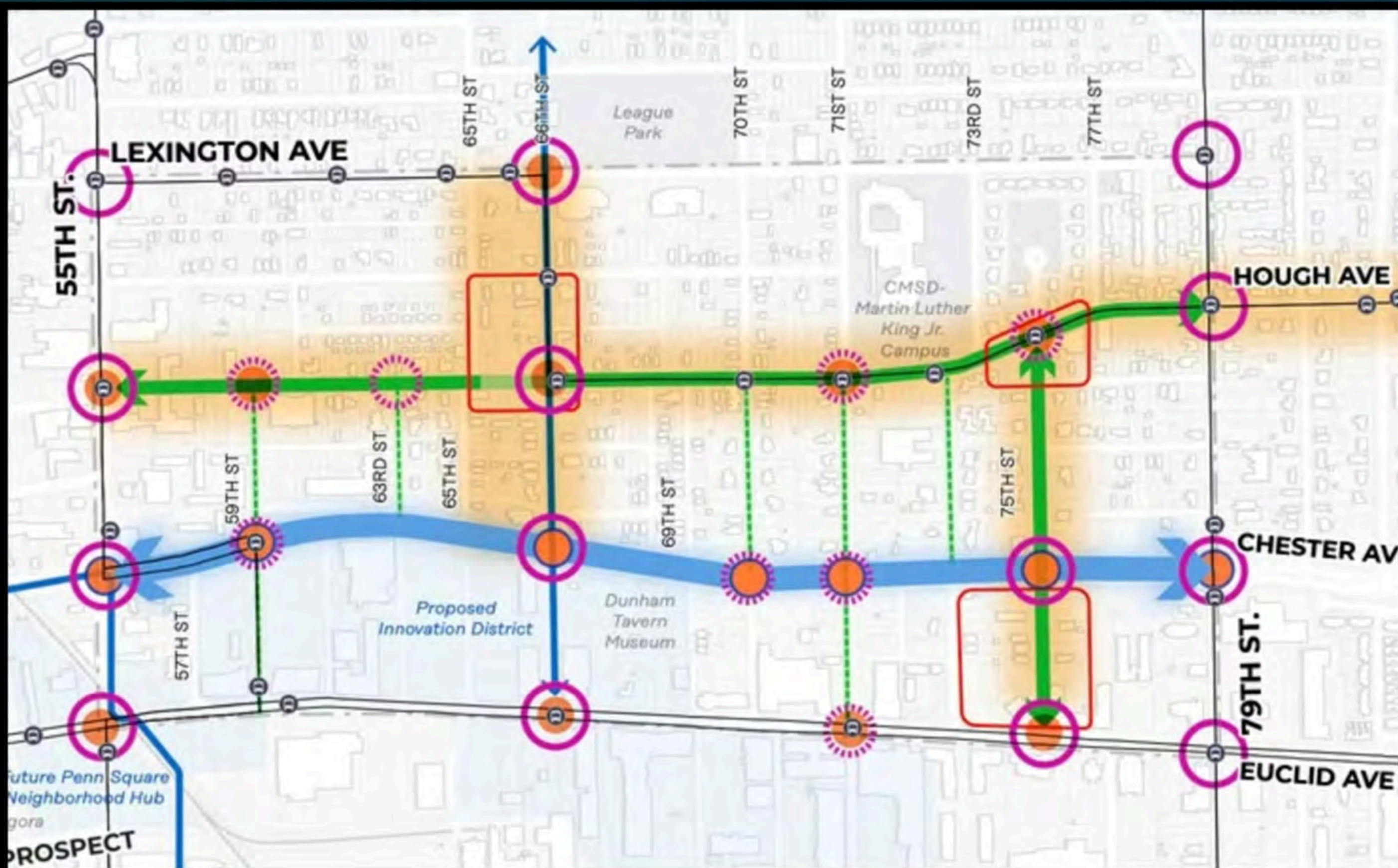


A neighborhood-based, naturally occurring, cultural ecosystem defined by a concentration of cultural assets, businesses, residents and creatives who engage in a creative and conventional economy.

It is shaped by interconnected social and spatial networks of creativity and commerce that generate social benefits, strengthen neighborhood resilience, catalyzes collective wealth building and advances shared prosperity.



Study Area



OPPORTUNITIES

-  Focus Area
-  GCRTA Bus Routes
-  Major streetscape improvements
-  Local green connectors
-  Connect Chester Avenue
-  Key Intersection Safety Improvements
-  Cultural wayfinding and signage
-  Community Activation
-  Areas for community investment

A Place Called Hough

PLANNING & STUDIES

HOUGH Cultural Preservation Project
Over the past fifteen years, millions of dollars have supported multiple planning, health, transportation, and neighborhood studies on Hough. While these efforts differed in scope and funding sources, they consistently surfaced a shared set of people-centered challenges.

The PEOPLE pillar of the Hough Cultural Preservation Project (HCPP) directly responds to these documented findings.



**League Park District:
Transportation and
Redevelopment Plan**



**East 55th & Euclid
Avenue Crossroads
Study (TLCI)**



**The Public Benefits and
Value of Arts & Culture in
Cuyahoga County
(2013)**



**Cleveland's Greater
University Circle
Initiative
(Cleveland Foundation)**



**Healthy Hough Health
Impact Assessment
(2013-2015)**



**THRIVE 105-93
Planning Study
(2015-2020)**

2012

2013

2015

2

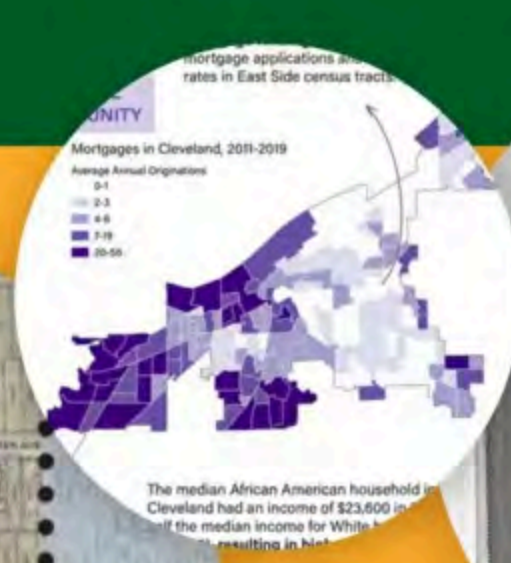


A Place Called Hough

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Cleveland 2030:
A Housing Equity Plan

Dunham Tavern Museum &
Gardens Master Plan



COPA Project Hough Strategic Plan
(2023-2025)



Form Based Code Pilot Study - Hough
(2023-2024)



Catalytic Capital for
Neighborhood Reinvestment
(Urban Institute)

MidTown Cleveland
Neighborhood Vision Plan
(2020-2021)

East 66th Street
Implementation Plan

North Coast Master Plan (2023)

2024

ULI Cleveland:
Connecting Arts +
Real Estate -
Hough Case Study
(2024)

People

WHO WE ARE

**HOUGH IS
SPEAKING.**

**CENTER
RESIDENTS VOICES
WITH:**

- CONNECTIVITY
- IDENTITY
- STORYTELLING

Place

WHERE WE GATHER

**HOUGH IS
HOME.**

**BUILD SPACES
THAT HONOR
COMMUNITY
WITH:**

- PLACEKEEPING
- INVESTMENT
- CORRIDORS

Power

WHAT WE SHAPE

**HOUGH IS
RISING.**

**WORK TOGETHER
TO DECIDE WHAT
COMES NEXT
WITH:**

- GOVERNANCE
- OWNERSHIP
- POLICY

Prosperity

HOW WE THRIVE

**HOUGH IS
BUILDING.**

**CREATE SYSTEMS
WHERE GROWTH
STAYS IN HOUGH,
WITH:**

- COMMERCE
- BUSINESS
- WEALTH CREATION

People

WHO WE ARE



What's one word that describes how you currently feel about staying connected to what's happening in Hough?



People Strategy + Communication System

"I've been in quite a few of these type of studies. And I like this because it's just some fresh set of eyes on our community.

The fact that we keep the documentation. I love that because a couple of groups come in, get all this information, survey, and then they leave with it, and the residents, the community don't have our hands on it."

Neighborhood Communication System

CREATE A VERIFIED REGISTRY OF RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND NGOS; HOLD QUARTERLY COORDINATION CONVENINGS; AVOID DUPLICATION AND REDUNDANCY TO MITIGATE ENGAGEMENT FATIGUE.



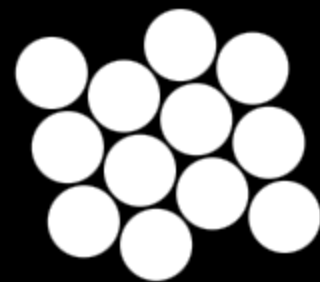
Go Vocal

International

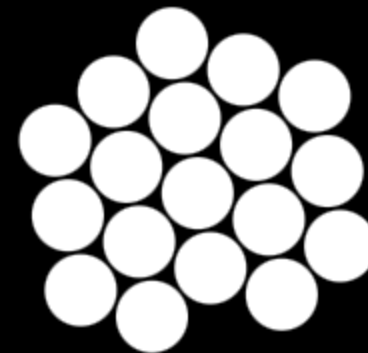
- **Inform** - Residents stay updated via email
- **Consult** - Residents give detailed feedback
- **Involve** - Residents publicly discuss and choose options
- **Collaborate** - Residents share and discussion their own ideas
- **Empower** - Residents allocate funds to their favorite ideas or propose projects



When you hear about something happening in your neighborhood, how do you usually find out?



12 Social media / group chats



18 Word of mouth / neighbors



5 Flyers / church



11 City or nonprofit email



4 I usually don't find out until after

How many community meetings, surveys, or events have you been asked to participate in over the past five years?

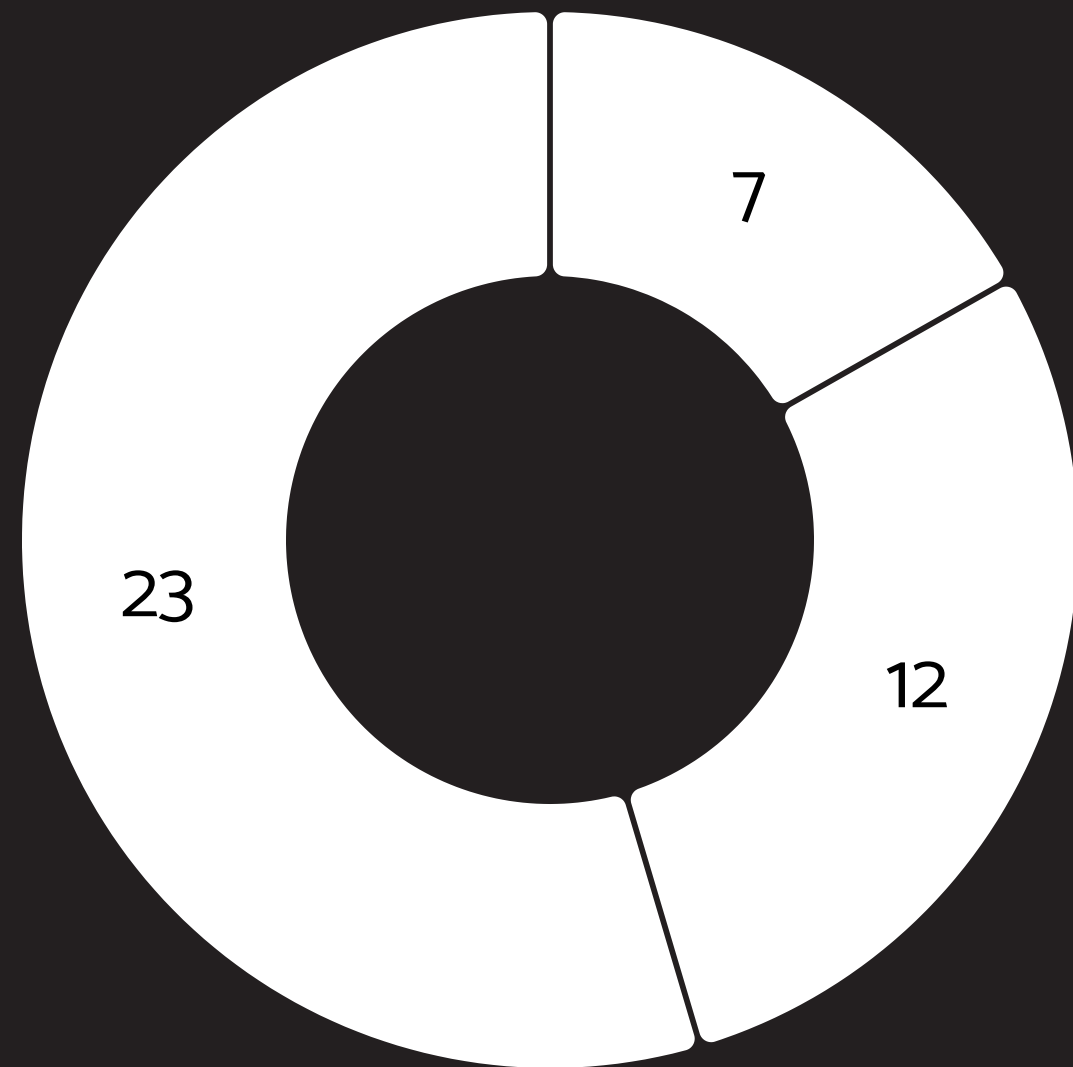


Place

WHERE WE
GATHER



When you think of a place in Hough that feels like IT – like this is where the neighborhood's heart is – where is that?



- 0 East 55th Street
- 7 East 66th Street / Black Avenue
- 0 East 75th Street Corridor
- 12 My church, my job, my community center, my park or my business
- 23 Honestly, we still need to co-create, curate that place

Place Strategy + Hough Identity

"Any person committed to art and design would say that's the way you build a good community that people want to walk through. Everywhere I look, it blends together. It unifies. We have to establish identity — somebody needs to begin to mold that identity through design."

Strengthen Cultural Anchors and Invest in District Identity

INVEST IN EAST 66TH, EAST 75TH, AND HOUGH AVENUE AS GATHERING NODES; INSTALL HOUGH-CENTRIC WAYFINDING AND DISTRICT SIGNAGE.



Old Seventh Ward

Philadelphia, PA

East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative

- Philadelphia Negro (1889)
- Mapping the Seventh Ward - maps, archival data, oral histories
- Preserves and presents intangible heritage

REFLECTING
REVENANTS
RECALLING BLACK LIFE
IN THE 7TH WARD

INSTALLATION LOCATIONS	
1. 1000 Locust St.	2. 1000 Locust St.
3. 1000 Locust St.	4. 1000 Locust St.
5. 1000 Locust St.	6. 1000 Locust St.
7. 1000 Locust St.	8. 1000 Locust St.
9. 1000 Locust St.	10. 1000 Locust St.



Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

black people

Lexington Village Sign

Hough Ave

My mama

League park

My home.

Nice houses

Hough Ave

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

League park

The Rec Center

Vacant homes

Hough Ave

League Park

My neighbors

Thurgood Marshal

League park

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

Leahue Park

Not sure

Wilson towers

Thurgood Marshall

Fatima

Seniors

Beautifully homes 

Cool Black people.

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

J-walking

The Obelisk

The winery

obelisk

Beautiful luxury homes

My neighbors

League Park

Vacant lots

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

Cleveland Clinic

The church on the corner
of my street

E 55 and League Park

league park

Corner of 79th & Hough

Fatima

League park

Hough ave

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

Fatima Family Center

Dunham

The African American
History Museum

Black people

League park

Dave's

Homes & businesses

Fatima

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

Fatima league Park

Cool black people

Black peoples

League Park

Artwork

More abandoned homes

Lexington Village sign

Cats

Finish this sentence: 'I know I'm in Hough when I see...'

Greenery

League park

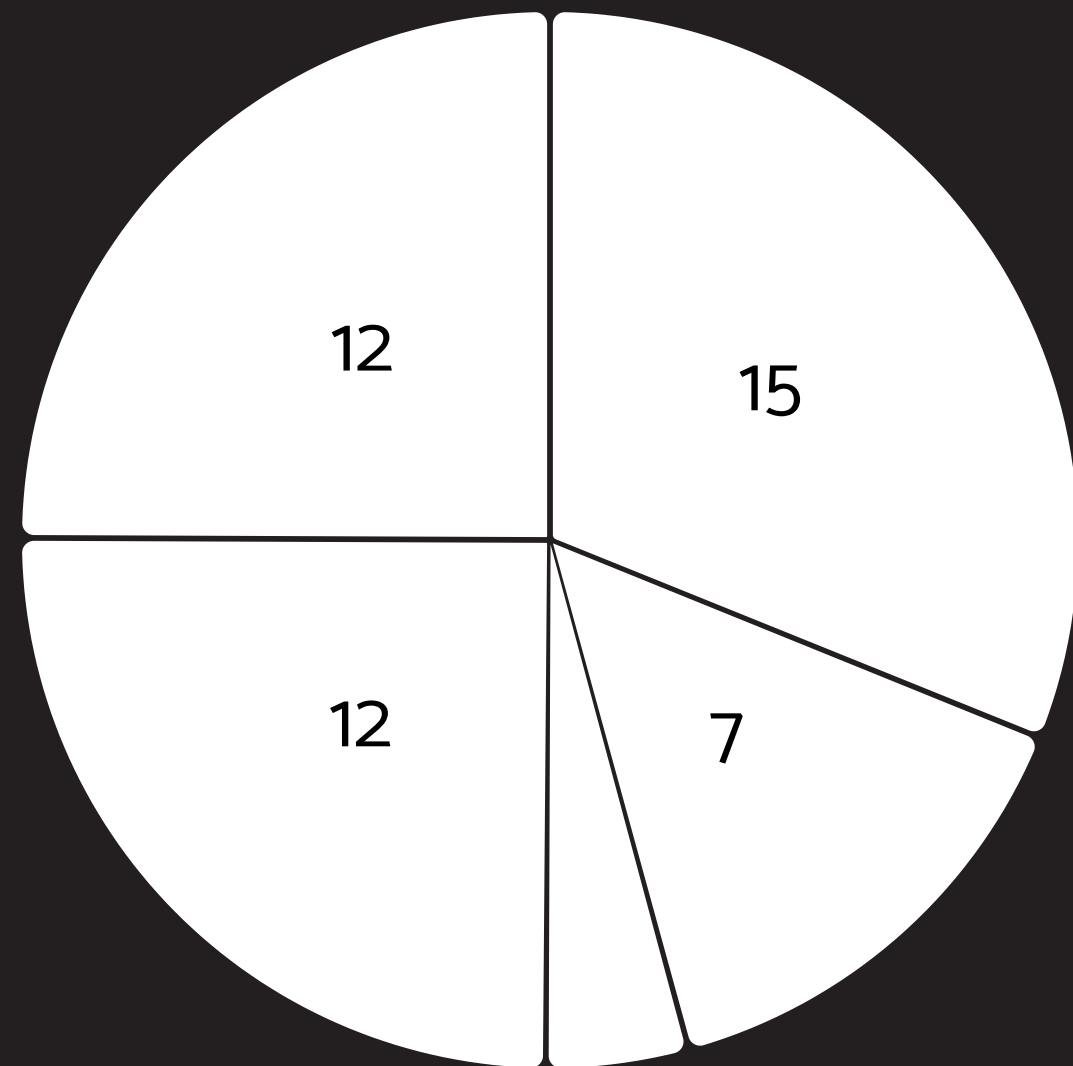
Hough ave

Renaissance homes next
to empty lots

Cleveland Clinic

East 55, League Park

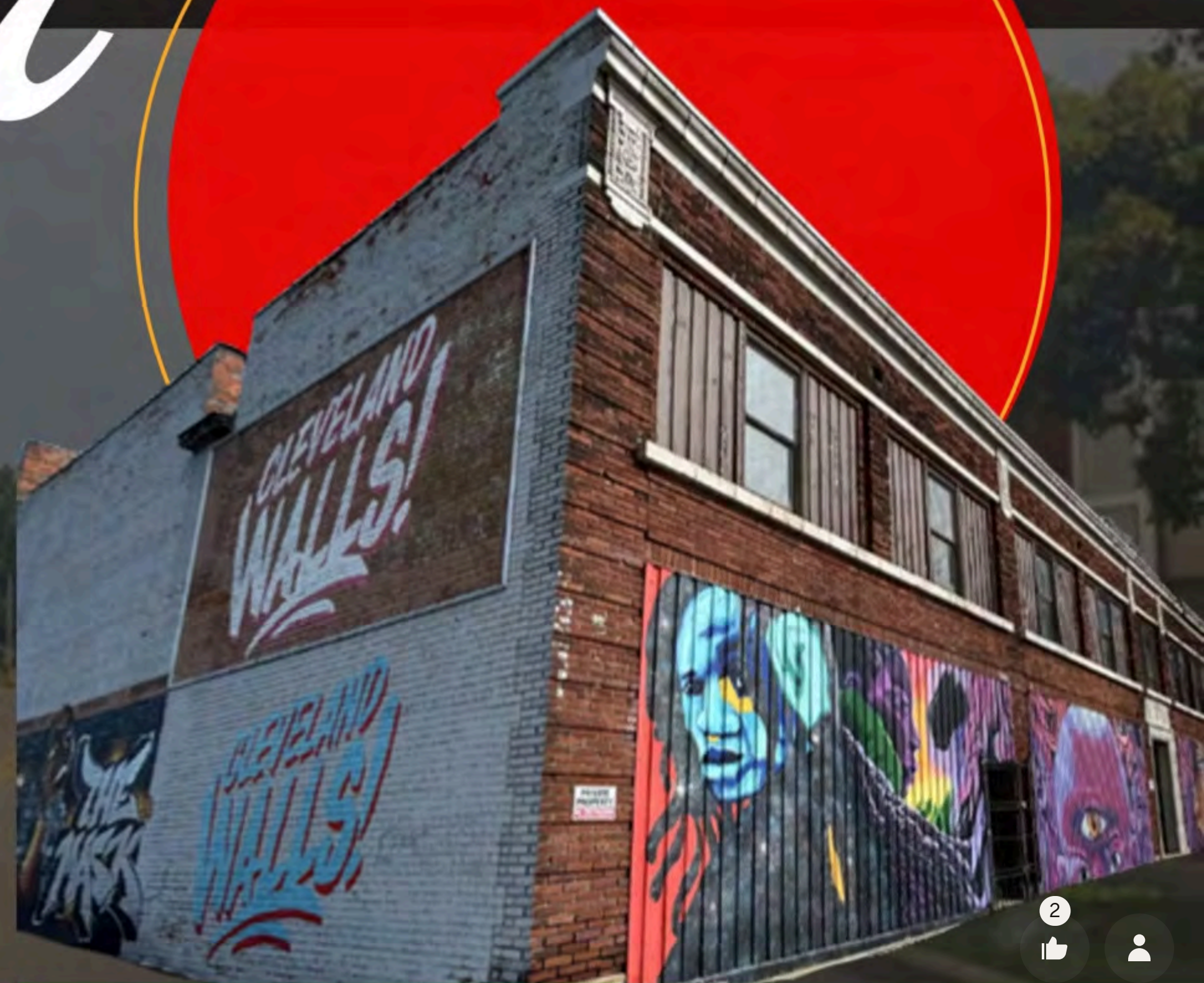
Which of these would make you feel safest in Hough? Rank your top 2.



- ☐ 15 Lighting, gathering spots, and places to be seen
- ☐ 7 Neighbors and businesses that know your name
- ☐ 2 Public art and markers that say we belong here
- ☐ 12 Events and programming that keep the block alive
- ☐ 12 Community ownership of the spaces around the neighborhood

Power

WHAT WE SHAPE



Power Strategy + Decision-Making

"When I was growing up, block clubs were very strong. They advocated. They had places where kids could come after school. They would have contests — who has the best flower garden. They bought street lamps for in front of their porches. That's a governing body. That's community. We need to figure out how to bring that back."

**Establish the HCP
Governing Board with
Majority Resident Control**

CREATE A CULTURAL
PRESERVATION ORGANIZATION
(CPO) — A FORMAL
GOVERNING BODY WITH
DECISION-MAKING POWER
OVER CULTURAL DISTRICT



Black Cultural Zone

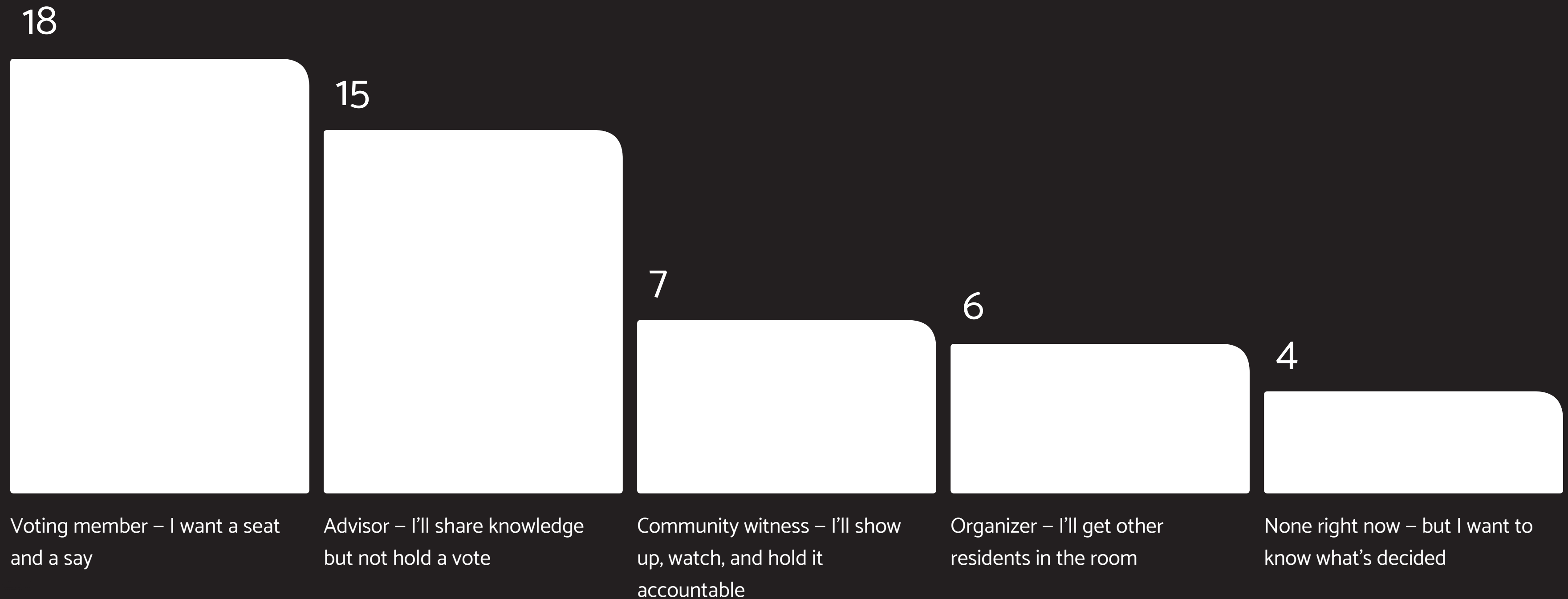
Oakland, CA

East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative

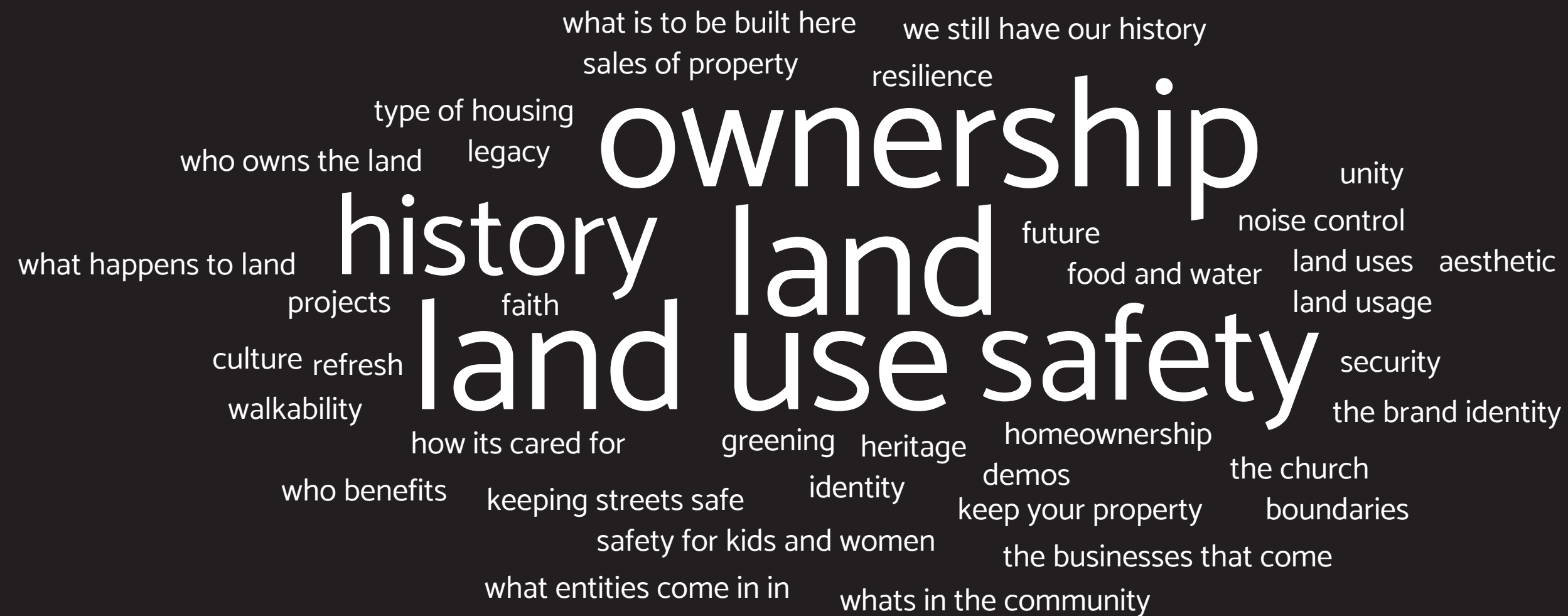
- 90+ partners including residents, non-profits, cultural institutions, and public agencies
- Liberated Land Trust to secure permanent community ownership of property
- Developed Liberation Park into a mixed-use cultural hub with a food hall & outdoor rink
- Employs 190 community stewards, safety ambassadors



If this board was created, what role would you want to play? Pick all that apply.



What's one decision about Hough that belongs to the community?



Prosperity

HOW WE THRIVE



If you live in Hough, how long have you lived here?



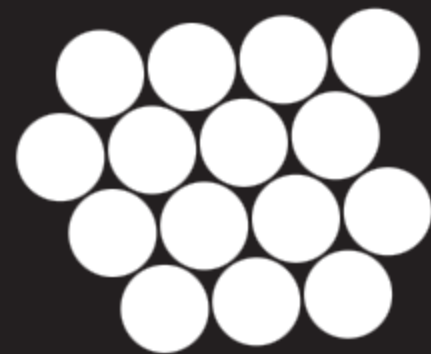
3 Less than 1 year



4 2–10 years



3 10–20 years



15 20+ years – I’ve seen it all



8 I grew up here and came back

Prosperity Strategy + Anti-Displacement

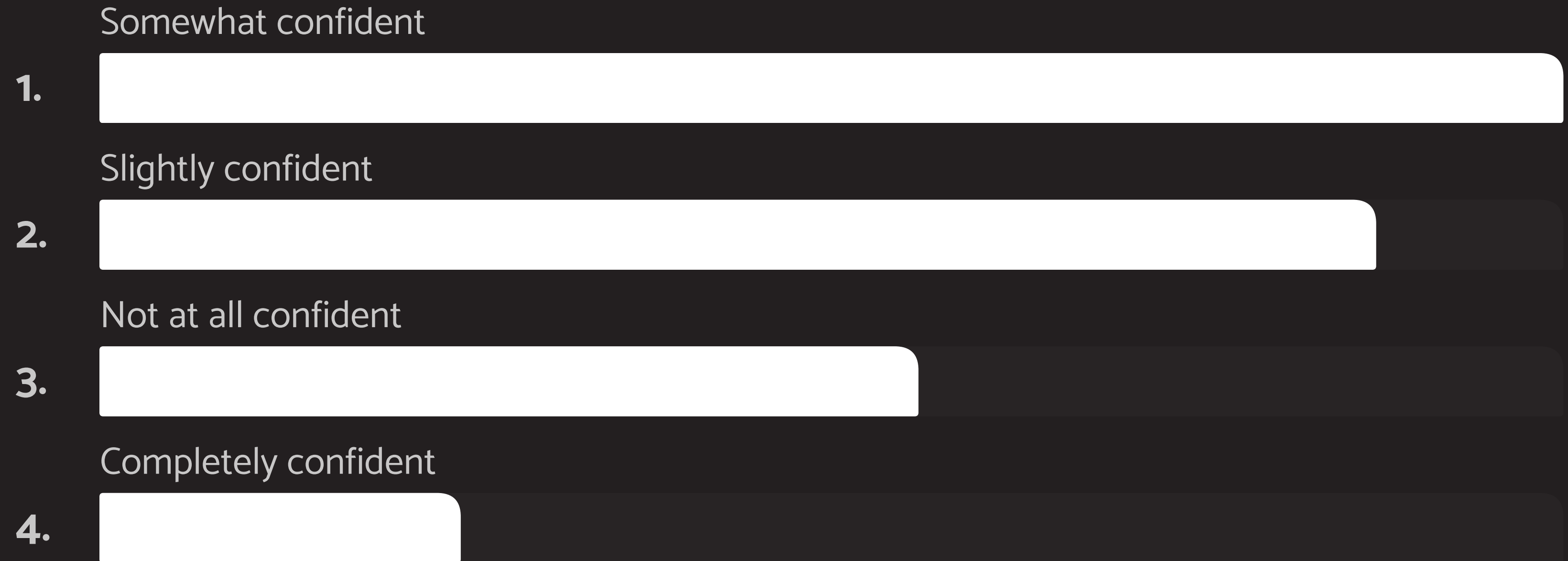
"I want to be able to go get my coffee, to buy my bread. My people want a good, safe, and clean community, just like anyone else."

Stabalize and Maintain Existing Homeownership

CONNECT HOMEOWNERS TO REPAIR PROGRAMS; ESTABLISH CPO NAVIGATOR ROLE; HOST QUARTERLY HOMEOWNER CLINICS TO PREVENT DISPLACEMENT.



How confident are you that people who already live and invest in Hough will actually benefit?



REVERT Program

Louisville, KY

Restoring Each Viable Economically Redlined Territory (**REVERT**)

- Provides up to \$50,000 in funding
- Rehabilitates or rebuilds homes safely
- Enhances energy efficiency and curb appeal
- Supports long-term homeownership stability



What would it feel like to watch Hough become everything you know it can be?



The Point

"Hough no longer needs additional planning. The neighborhood needs a structure that connects existing plans, active organizations, and current investments into a shared vision that benefits residents directly."

"To say it plainly, this is a vision that we all, as a community, need to buy into and refine. It doesn't mean that consultants will tell you what you should do. We're saying, this is a vision for what you could do. It's time has come and there are examples of people who have done it in other places that Hough can take and reinterpret in its own unique way. That's, like, the point."



Looking Ahead... ...staying involved



STAYING CONNECTED



Commitment to Preserving Culture in Hough

PATHWAYS & PROCESS



ASHLEY SHAW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thank You!

JOIN US FOR FUN &
FELLOWSHIP AT

THE BLACK FROG
BREWERY



HOUGH

Cultural Preservation Project

A STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE